TABLE 5

Proportion of Correct, Incorrect, and Missing Answers to the 18 Items on the Medical Data Interpretation Test for 178 Participants

Knowledge basis for comparisons	Answered correctly (%)	Answered incorrectly (%)	Left blank (%)
Know that a denominator is needed to calculate risk	75	24	1
Know that denominators are needed to compare risks in 2 groups	45	54	1
Know that the base rate is needed in addition to relative risk to determine the magnitude of benefit	63	36	1
Know that a comparison group is needed to decide whether benefit exists	81	18	1
Know that lowering all-cause mortality provides better evidence of benefit than lowering a single cause of death	20	79	1
Comparison tasks			
Select "1 in 296" as a larger risk than "1 in 407"	85	14	1
Inferred items[a]			
Rate the riskiness of a 9 in 1,000 chance of death as the same as a 991 in 1,000 chance of surviving	61	37	2
Select a larger risk estimate for deaths from all causes than deaths from a specific disease	30	69	1
Select a larger risk estimate for a 20-year risk than for a 10-year risk	39	60	1
Calculations related to comparisons			
Calculate risk in intervention group by applying relative risk reduction to a baseline risk	87	11	2
Calculate 2 absolute risk reductions from relative risk reductions and baseline risks and select the larger	80	19	1
Calculate relative risk reduction from 2 absolute risks	52	46	2
Calculate absolute risk reduction from 2 absolute risks	77	19	4
Calculate the number of events by applying absolute risk to number in group	72	22	6
Context for comparisons			
Know that age and sex of individuals in the source data are needed	47	51	2
Know that age of individuals in the source data is needed	60	39	1
Know that risk of other diseases is needed for context	62	35	3
Know that, for male smokers, the risk of lung cancer death is greater than prostate cancer death	60	37	3

Note. [a]These items were based on a total of 5 separate questions.